

NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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CONGRESSIONAL DEMOCRATS DEMAND THE TRUTH

16 Democrats Supportive of Iraqi War Resolution Sign Markey Letter to Bush on False Intelligence

WASHINGTON, DC- Representative Edward Markey (D-MA), Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Taskforce on Nonproliferation and a Senior Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Select Committee on Homeland Security, sent a letter to President Bush questioning the erroneous information provided to Congress by the Administration to convince Members to vote in favor of House Joint Resolution 114, authorizing military force in Iraq. The letter was signed by 16 House Democratic lawmakers, all of whom had voted to authorize the President to use force if inspections failed to address the threat posed by reported Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction.

Rep. Markey said, "President Bush has many questions to answer about the use and misuse of intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs. The American people were given erroneous information about Iraq's ability to threaten the United States with nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. I believe that the credibility of this Administration rests on the answers to the questions we have asked."

The letter that Rep. Markey released today states, "Press reports indicate that your Administration has now acknowledged that the claim that Iraq had recently sought to obtain significant quantities of uranium from Africa was erroneous and was based upon forged documents and already had been discredited by U.S. experts. This acknowledgement is welcome, but it brings into even sharper focus disturbing and serious questions about the credibility of the information your Administration presented to the Congress and the American public about the nature and scope of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programs in the months leading up to the initiation of U.S. military operations in Iraq," the letter to President Bush states.

The letter continues, "Mr. President, we know that you share our concern about the potential damage that the revelations regarding the false uranium information has done and is doing to U.S. nonproliferation efforts around the world. As a direct result of concerns over manipulation or exaggeration of intelligence information regarding weapons of mass destruction, there is a danger that nations around the world may lose confidence that they can rely on the United States for straight information on the growing risk of nonproliferation. Without the credible leadership of the U.S. in combating the spread of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, this effort becomes a dangerous muddle, rife for exploitation by proliferators."

The letter, sent on July 11, 2003 asks a variety of questions regarding the use of the information on the sale of uranium in Niger in the State of the Union Address; the whereabouts of mobile biological weapons labs; the whereabouts of 500 tons of sarin, mustard and VX nerve agent; and finally, what controls were in place and who was authorized to approve the use of false intelligence information by the Executive Branch.

The letter was signed by 16 Democratic Members who voted in favor of H.J. Res. 114 and can be found at <http://www.house.gov/markey>: Markey (MA); Kennedy (RI); Bishop (GA); Meehan (MA); Pascrell (NJ); Weiner (NY); Tauscher (CA); Dooley (CA); Taylor (MS); Hill (IN); Wexler (FL); Berry (AR); Rothman (NJ); Berkley (NV); Ackerman (NY); Israel (NY).

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